The Sketch

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23, 1944

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

Postage: Inland 2d. Canada & Newfoundland 1d. Foreign 1½d.

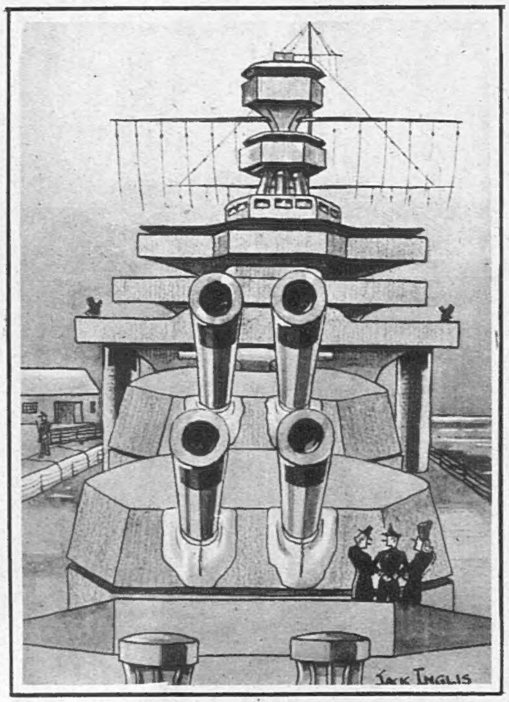
HAREM HAIR-DO.

How would you like to do your hair this way every morning? M.-G.-M.'s new Technicolor, "Kismet," presents MARLENE'S *crowning glory looking like a coiffeur's dream of overtime. Elaborately rolled and plaited and curled, the star plays Jarmila, harem dancer and Grand Vizier's favourite, emerging in one scene with her elegant legs thickly cased in gold and her hair gold-powdered—Marlene on the gold standard! This aspect was pictured in an earlier issue of "The Sketch." Cast with her are Ronald Colman as Hajj, Edward Arnold as the Grand Vizier, James Craig as the young Caliph.*

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

How the Poor Live. The everlasting hardships of war! This is my miserable situation. All domestic help (if it can be so called) is absent on compassionate leave. My entire family has deserted me. (It 's all right: the separation is collusive.) There used to be a low song: "Everybody works in our 'ouse But our old man." The position is reversed. They all go off to disport themselves and the old man toils on. However, I 'm not complaining. I enjoy as much as the next man the pleasures of martyrdom, and whatever consolations Cinderella may have found as she sat by the dying fire, those consolations are mine. Actually, my solitude is not as complete as that of Cinderella. I occupy the house, which happens to have rather a large number of rooms, in the company of a young married woman in her twenties, an evacuated schoolgirl aged sixteen, and a bright young man aged one and six-twelfths (not my property!). Have no fears: it is all highly respectable.



"... and where are the little ones that only weigh one pound?" (DRAWN BY JACK INGLIS.)

The Complete Slavey.

I consider myself a pretty useful housemaid. At shoe-cleaning, bed-making, bath-cleaning, clothes-valeting, Hoovering and kindred domestic arts I yield to none. I claim, and I will maintain the claim in any woman's beard (in a manner of speaking), that I can perform most of these menial tasks in about half the time taken by professionals. Yes, I know they will smile pityingly and say that I only half-do everything. I deny it. I flatter myself on combining rapidity with efficiency and economy of labour, for it is my considered opinion that a lot of this fanatical, new-pin domestic "thoroughness" is sheer waste of effort. In the kitchen I take a back seat. There was a time when I could toss a pretty pancake, but I can't do it with dried eggs. My culinary accomplishments are now confined to frying sausages and bacon, and I should add eggs, if there were any eggs to add. I *ought* to wash up. I dodge it, finding the most discreditable excuses. It is work which revolts me to the soul. I will not even wash up the baby. In my experience, babies are too slippery to be bathed. I refuse to deal with them until nature has provided some better handholds.

"Oh, sir, I didn't realise it was *that* memo. you were looking for!"

DRAWN BY JOHN G. WALTER.

Escapism.

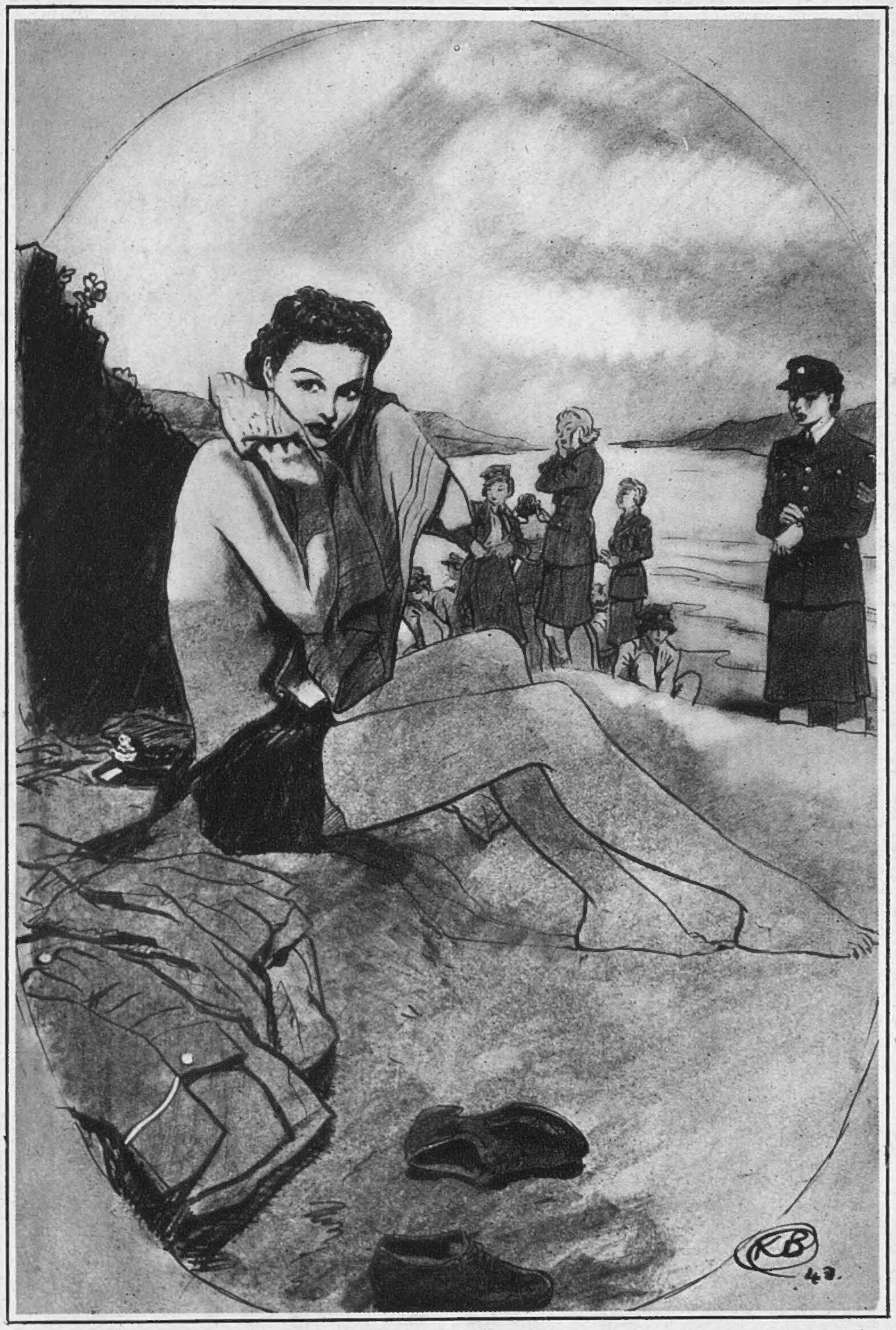
Well, that is my holiday at home. And you can spare your pity, because I am thoroughly enjoying it! Domestic drudge I may be, but I feel a considerable sense of release. I refuse to see anybody, pleading a dust-sheeted house. I will not, if I can help it, even answer the telephone. In short, with the exception of the other inmates, I am cut off from my fellow-creatures, and I think that that is a very good form of holiday when you have been seeing too much of your fellow-creatures. I get more satisfaction out of contemplating a ripening tomato in the greenhouse than talking about the war situation with chatty droppers-in. I have returned to Nature and find her soothing. But, ah! what will happen when all the forces of civilisation return and re-establish order and convention I tremble to think! It is then, I suspect, that war-strain will begin to manifest itself!

"This one 's always crammed full, sir, but if you 'll follow me I 'll find standing-room in the corridor outside a First." (DRAWN BY SILENUS.)

Lepidoptera. Segregated in this manner from mankind, I have had time to contemplate some of the mysteries of nature, and I am sure you would wish to have the benefit of my reflections. Take wasps, for instance. So long as this summer remained a sort of sulky winter, the wasps very sensibly declared a sit-down strike at their Annual Trade Union Congress. At present, when you are having tea in the garden, you cannot put a speck of jam on your bread without being attacked by a Panzer Division of wasps executing a strong pincer movement. Any space in the atmosphere not occupied by wasps and doodle-bugs is appropriated by small and peculiarly adhesive flies. I hear of one town which is being steadily devoured by ladybirds, and of one county where foxes are estimated to absorb a thousand eggs a week. All my broad beans were consumed root and branch by the black fly, and I perceive that my cabbages and sprouts are now a teeming colony of dear little white butterfly caterpillars, which will soon reduce them to a sort of open-work pattern.

The Borgias Outdone.

These things are undoubtedly great mysteries. In the Great Scheme of Things, wasps and black flies may have a wise purpose—so, I dare say, have centipedes and tarantulas—but my reflections on the problem have led me to the conclusion that I do not know what the purpose is. I should therefore be inclined to give up the problem in despair if it were not that science once more comes to the aid of frail and perplexed humanity. I have been reading a lot about DDT. This is not a new branch of the Roosevelt administration, nor does it stand for Deputy Director of Transport or Damn the Damn Thing; no, it stands for (and will you, esteemed compositor, please take very great care here) "p : p'—dichloro diphenyl—1 : 2 : 3—trichloreothan." You can put that in your pipe and smoke it, but if you do, you will be dead in about thirty seconds. This mixture of symbols, punctuation, figures and unpronounceable words is the King of Insecticides—naturally enough, for it is obvious that no insect has the slightest chance against a thing with a name like that.



"Time to get dressed, you! Sorry, Ma'am, didn't recognise you in mufti!"

DRAWN BY KENNETH BEAUCHAMP.

Mass Murder. It is "synthetic and multi-purpose." It kills bugs, fleas, cockroaches, beetles, cabbage worms, apple-codling moths, aphides, and other small organisms which are not freely mentioned in polite society, but which are very important in connection with epidemics. It stopped an outbreak of typhus in Naples; perhaps it will do the same in Florence. The shirts of the loyal troops in the field are impregnated with it (ah, how different from the Other War!). Highly indigestible to the mosquito, it may defeat malaria, which historians say has been responsible for the downfall of empires. Given enough DDT, you could slaughter all the insects in the world, which I have often thought would be an immense improvement in nature. But I wonder if there is not a catch in it somewhere? Eliminate all insects and I wonder whether some other sort of frightfulness would not happen? It seems very difficult to circumvent nature in its persistent efforts at frightfulness. However, don't let that deter us in the meantime from DDT-ing a few wasps, flies, cockroaches and other Dumb Friends.

Rough on Rats.

Nothing is said about its effect on rats, but I suppose we need not bother about that, because the Government has taken the matter in hand—so it is sure to be all right. Better than DDT is DIC, which stands for Directorate of Infestation Control. This now flourishes in Whitehall, with every prospect of developing into a Ministry of Vermin. There is already a corps of Rodent Officers—not to be confused, of course, with common rat-catchers. The qualifications are high, and all applicants are required to answer yards of inquiries and particulars on a questionnaire which leads a strong field for the Whitehall Stakes. You will be surprised, too, to learn how much man-power is required to liquidate one rat, and what a lot of strategy is needed. A de-infestation platoon consists of one "operator" to deposit the bait, one "recorder" to drive the car and keep a log "attached to a stout board with weather-protecting cover," one sewer-man (why not a Drainage Technician?) and one labourer (why not a Manual Assistant?) for non-hinged covers. I would suggest

[Continued overleaf.

" George, darling. I think I 'm going to have a little green ration book ! "

DRAWN BY APP.

a few Pied Pipers, Grade I, to collect the quarry and assist mass operations; but that might prevent the Department from keeping a separate file for each rat, and thus deprive members of the Directorate from earning an honest livelihood. That must be avoided at all costs.

Casualties and Damage.

It is one of the little paradoxes of war that while we are going to all this trouble to get rid of creatures which we do not happen to like, we are also going to a great deal of trouble to preserve creatures which we do happen to like. Doodle-bugs bear very hardly on domestic animals, which have just as strong feelings about them as the rest of us, but unfortunately have no technique in taking cover. I think this is the only country in the world which would have an organisation for rescuing injured and endangered animals, but such an organisation is the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals. Its indefatigable and intrepid squads have saved hundreds of thousands of birds and beasts from the fury of the enemy. The other day they found three ducks taking refuge from " casualties and damage " in a dustbin: I never esteemed the duck highly for its intelligence, but it seems to have a sound instinct for a Morrison Shelter !

"Ain't there enough noise 'ere without you drinking soup ?"

DRAWN BY CANE.

Another Illusion Gone !

While this country is unanimous in its solicitude for animals (for some reason, usually called " dumb," though many of them are far from that), there are other things for which it seems to have an unconquerable aversion. Every country, I suppose, needs something to put the blame on. One of these convenient scapegoats has always been the War Office. It is notorious that the War Office can never do anything right, and that it is staffed entirely by Whitehall Warriors and bescarleted nincompoops. The extraordinary thing is that, in spite of this gross incompetence at the top, we seem to have won a few wars in our time. Anyhow, we have recently seen the astounding spectacle of the Prime Minister of this country going out of his way to throw bouquets at the War Office. Nothing could illustrate more forcibly the deplorable decline of our political life. Nothing, literally nothing, is sacred—not even the age-old bungling and mismanagement of all our most intelligent soldiers ! Never did I think I should live to see this day !

The Airborne Brew.

Not even beer is sacred. British beer is no longer British beer ; they have been " improving " the flavour of it by growing new kinds of super-hops. All I can say is that you wouldn't notice it—but then I have never been a beer-fan. Herein I differ from Tommy. I gather (without surprise) that what he craves most is tea, but he also wants beer, and, like his predecessor of twenty-five years ago, he takes a poor view of estaminet beer, if there is any. If he has tried the Normandy cider, such as I have sampled, he will be taking an even poorer view of foreign beverages. Well, there are fighter-bombers now flying to the front with their reserve petrol tanks full of beer. It is poor fuel but good ballast. There are even barrels, with streamlined metal noses, on the bomb-racks, and more barrels hanging under the wings. I hope the grade is High Octane, but if so, the troops are luckier than the civilian population. The next thing, no doubt, will be a pipe-line across the Channel.

Old Enough to Know Worse.

I must be getting very long in the tooth, because I find myself constantly harping on the remarkable exploits of the Old and Bold in this war. Before me lies a Press photograph of an Admiral, aged seventy-three, who has been leading a Commando on a Mediterranean island. A previous Commando of his, entirely single-handed, against an Italian armoured car, resulted in a temporary seclusion, but on repatriation this zealous young officer cannot be restrained from capturing any islands which happen to be lying about loose.

I read also of an autobiographer, aged ninety-five, the last living member of a family whose combined ages totalled 776, who is busy with his memoirs ; and of a Nonconformist minister who recently preached a vigorous sermon in his ninety-ninth year. Against these creditable exploits I regret to have to record the ingenious and persistent shoplifting of a delinquent of ninety-six. Not without reason did the Chairman of the Bench say that he was almost old enough to know better. We live and don't learn.

Satan Finds Some Mischief.

Canada has no monopoly of Quins ; there is a clutch of them in Turkey, sired by one Rifat Aga. Is he proud ? When a B.U.P. reporter called on him he, it is officially stated, burst forth fiercely : " Even if my wife has been the victim of such dreadful Satanic misfortune as to have quintuplets, no offers of reward or fame would induce me to admit such a disgrace ! " Some people are never satisfied.

" Yes, sir. It looks as though our tanks had been through here."

DRAWN BY FITZ.

The ninety-sixth of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of " The Sketch " is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

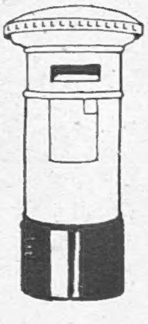
"What do you make of the weather, Old-Timer?"

WIDE OF THE MARK.

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT—You ask for news of the seagulls who built their nest on the Savernacks' roof. Well, I am glad to tell you that one egg hatched and the young bird has now flown, but not before it had caused the neighbourhood a lot of anxiety and provoked a serious quarrel between the Admiral and the Savernacks.

The trouble began while Mrs. Seagull was still sitting, and exciting our keenest sympathy by her bedraggled and exhausted appearance and the way she staggered about the roof when her husband condescended to take one of his all-too-brief turns on the nest. It was during this period, when we positively feared for her health and sanity, that Mr. Seagull saw fit to bring home a Lady Friend.

"He shot at the Lady Friend with an air-gun."

"How like a Man!" said Mrs. Admiral, with a keen look at her husband; and the Admiral shuffled with his feet and turned a dull purple.

The Lady Friend sat on a chimney-pot, just above the nest, uttering long peals of derisive laughter. Mrs. Seagull remained, with great dignity, on the nest, and, like many a wife before her, pretended she didn't notice.

They say there is nothing more prudish than a Reformed Rake, and it must have been the searing memory of past junketings at Singapore which made the Admiral espouse Mrs. Seagull's cause with such violence, so that he shot at the Lady Friend with an air-gun and cracked the Savernacks' chimney. This annoyed the Savernacks, who were annoyed already because people would keep leaning over their wall and throwing bad fishes' heads into their back-yard, and they threatened to have the nest destroyed.

This threw the Admiral, who is worried about his boy in Normandy and inclined to be touchy anyway, into a frenzy, and he wrote the Savernacks an abusive letter. The next day Mrs. Savernack wrote an abusive letter back again and cut Mrs. Admiral in the Street.

That evening the Admiral went down to the Savernacks' prepared to make a Scene. Luckily, Mrs. Savernack was out, and Mr. Savernack, who had won a croquet tournament that afternoon, was in a mellow mood and promised they wouldn't destroy the nest, and they hadn't really meant to, anyway. But he did complain about the fishes' heads and the way people hung over his wall all day looking at the nest. He said he and Mrs. Savernack seemed to be having all the bother of the nest and none of the fun, because they couldn't see it. So the Admiral invited him to come and look at it from his house, and having won a bottle of gin in a Red Cross Raffle he was able to mix some really potent cocktails and the whole thing passed off very successfully.

Weeks went by and nothing happened. Mrs. Seagull, now in a very weak state, still sat on the nest, and the dreadful word "addled" began to be whispered about the place. And then, one morning, I looked out of my window and saw her standing up in the nest, bending over a little ball of dark-grey fluff.

"Hatched! Hatched!" I cried loudly, and Charles came running from his dressing-room with a small pair of opera-glasses, having given his good field-glasses for the War Effort and regretted it ever since.

He focused the glasses carefully on the nest. "Constipated looking thing," said Charles, who was obviously moved by the sight, but didn't want to show it.

The Baby Seagull, who came to be known as Alexander, prospered, and soon began walking about his little bit of roof in a tentative sort of way, pecking at the nauseating offal brought to it by its parents from the beach. And then, one day, Mr. Savernack got a cold, and the weather having turned wet and chilly, was put to bed in the spare room with a fire.

"Removing the fire in a bucket."

The Admiral came thundering on our door. "What the hell do the Savernacks think they are doing?" he shouted. "Look at that smoke!"

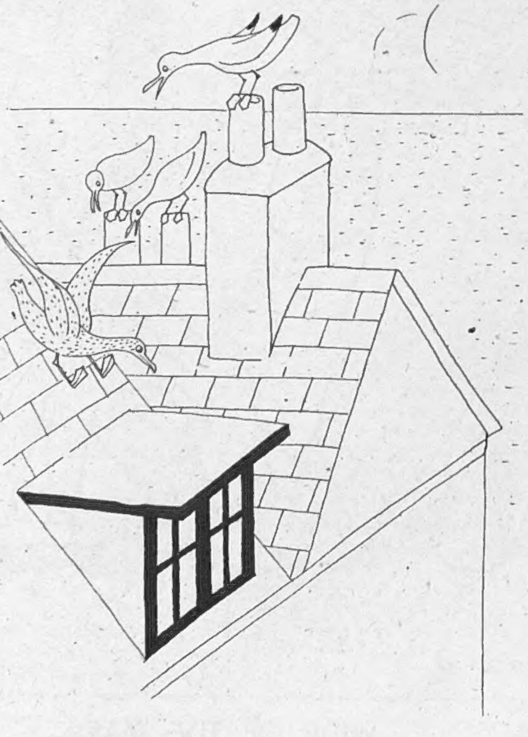
We looked. The wind was blowing from the South-West, and Mrs. Seagull, sitting uncomfortably on Alexander, who was too big to be sat on, was enveloped in clouds of smoke. "She's doing her best, brave Little Woman," said the Admiral, with emotion, "but she'll be choked if this sort of thing goes on." Fortunately, it was Mrs. Whinebite who quarrelled with the Savernacks this time by rushing into Mr. Savernack's bedroom with a shovel and removing the fire in a bucket.

After this Alexander began to try his wings. His method was to go into the corner by his nest, and then, with wings outstretched and uttering shrill, piping cries, to begin running across the roof. Half-way across he would leap hopefully into the air, only to fall flat on his face. This performance was repeated several times a day, and never failed to amuse Charles, who began to neglect his work in order to hang out of the windows for fear of missing something.

"There he goes! Flat on his face again!"

"Poor little Alexander. I don't think you ought to laugh at him, Charles."

"I do hope I shan't miss the day he becomes air-borne," said Charles, drawing his head in from the window with reluctance. "I should never get over it."



"Tobogganed down the other side."

Very early next morning I was awakened by the screaming of seagulls. Seagulls often scream, but this was so continuous and so loud that even Charles woke up and said: "Those damned birds!"

I jumped out of bed, and there on the Savernacks' chimney-pots were Mr. and Mrs. Seagull, and the Lady Friend, all screaming, and Alexander running up and down his little bit of roof in what was obviously the preliminary frenzy of a first flight.

"Quick, Charles!" I shouted. "He's off!"

Charles bounded out of bed and joined me at the window. "Well, I never! The Lady Friend, too!" he said. "She can't be such a bad sort, after all."

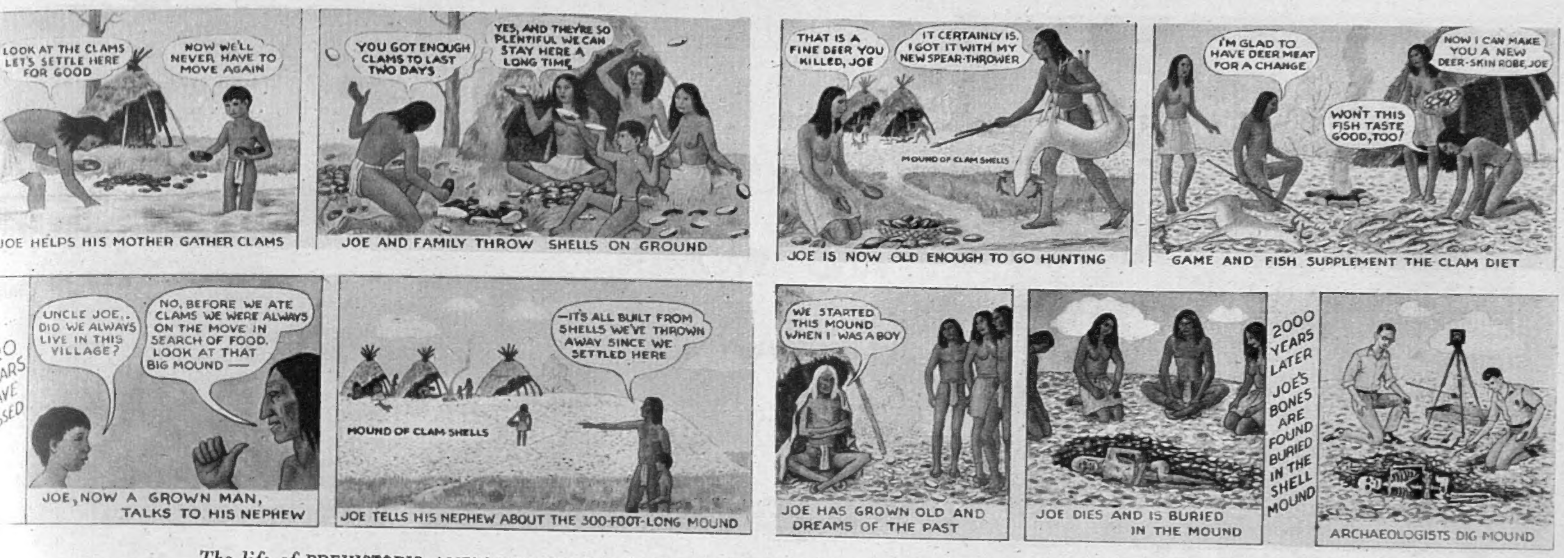
"I don't believe she is a Lady Friend. She's probably an Aunt or a Godmother."

"And the Admiral nearly shot her!" said Charles.

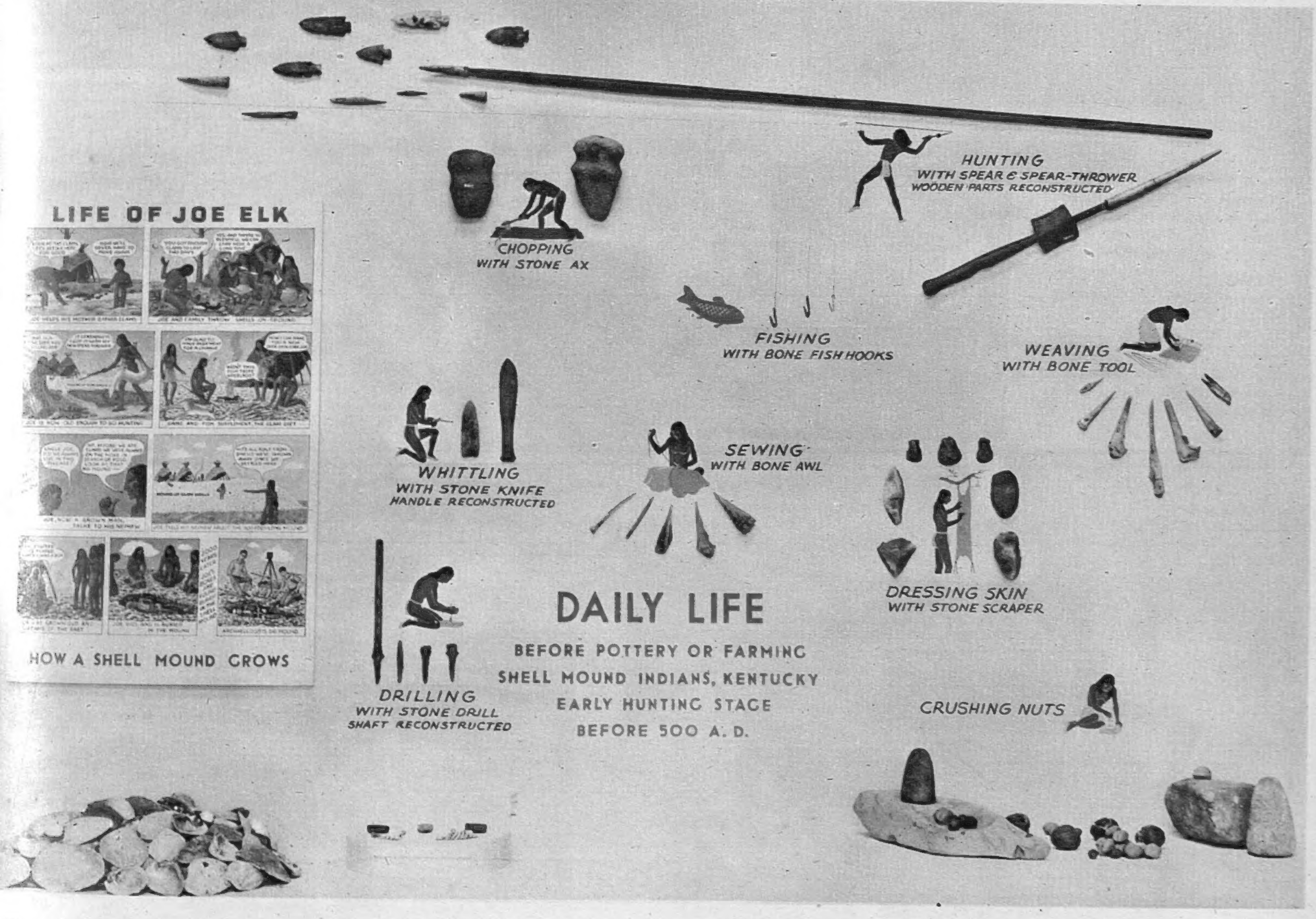
Just then Alexander, excited to madness by the shrieks of his relations, rose into the air, tried to land on top of the roof, missed it, tobogganed down the other side, tried to land on the top of another dormer window, missed it, fell into space, flapped his wings, then suddenly spread them and sailed away, as though he had been flying for years.

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.



The life of PREHISTORIC AMERICAN INDIANS *illustrated in newspaper-cartoon style*: HOW A KENTUCKY SHELL-MOUND GREW.



The layout of a new type of Anthropological exhibit just installed at the Chicago Natural History Museum, showing (left), "comic-strip" technique (enlarged at the top of the page), which provides scientific information without calling for the effort of reading a long label or caption.

ANTHROPOLOGY WITHOUT TEARS—BY COMIC-STRIP TECHNIQUE.

The study of Anthropology without tears—and without even the necessity for reading anything except the short "snappy" titles required for newspaper "comic strips"—is now available for Chicago Museum visitors. Dr. Paul S. Martin, Chief Curator of Anthropology at the Chicago Natural History Museum, realised that well over half the United States' adults, and two-thirds of the country's children over six are enthusiastic students of newspaper comic strips or "funnies." Why not, he thought, exploit this modern taste so that culture and information might be painlessly absorbed? Hence the inauguration of the Museum comic-strip technique to illustrate the life and development of the North American Prehistoric Indian. Dr. Martin, in collaboration with Mr. G. I. Quimby, Jr., and Mr. D. Collier, Curators on his staff, supplied Mr. G. Dalstrom, an artist on the staff of the Department of Anthropology, with the data. He used a technique known as "overpainting," employed by many Renaissance artists, notably Botticelli.

SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN, ENTERTAINMENTS, A WEDDING AND A PRINCESS:

MLLE. MOREAU (MME. EVRARD), *the Heroine of Loos, of the 1914-18 war, is in London. She has been taking an active part in this war, and is a delegate to the French Consultative Assembly.*

PRIVATE ENID POWELL, *of Toronto, member of the Canadian "Quaks" Invasion Revue Concert Party, will start off with her wardrobe in apple-pie order. Hence washing day at the Transit Camp.*

Right: VICE-ADMIRAL J. SWIRSKI, POLISH NAVY, MAJOR A. HUSKISSON, M.C., COL. MALLY, *Polish Army, and* LT.-COL. MNISZEK, *Polish Army, attended a reception of the Allied Welcome Committee at the Dorchester.*

CPL. E. R. BELL, *of D Platoon, 123rd Co., R.A.S.C. (C.M.T.) won the Silver Rose Bowl for the best A.T.S. garden, and i[s] receiving her trophy from* LT.-GEN. SIR EDMOND SCHREIBER, *Officer Commanding-in-Chief, S.E. Command.*

S.S.S.F.A. organises distribution of clothing to Servicemen's children who are being evacuated. LADY RIDDELL-WEBSTER *(r.) and* LADY KELL *are fitting out some young clients with cash but not coupon-free garments.*

MISS V. PEARSON, *twenty-nine-year-old expert, is teaching the art of weldi[ng] to R.A.F. trainees in a huge steel chamber in a Sheffield factory. She wo[rks] under her maiden name, but she is the wife of a Czech soldier.*

LADY TEDDER *is on the battlements of the château where the first Malcolm Club in Normandy is now installed. Pictures of the W.A.A.F. Gang Show given there are on another page.*

PICTORIAL RECORD OF PEOPLE AND EVENTS OF THE DAY.

The COUNTESS OF CARLISLE, *new Chief Commander of the W.A.C. (I.) is seen in her new Delhi H.Q. Her Indian staff officer,* JUNIOR COMMANDER D. KAPILA, *wears an Indian version of Service uniform.*

GEORGE FORMBY *and his wife Beryl have been entertaining troops in Normandy. Here George, complete with tin hat and banjo, is making a group of Engineers laugh good and hearty.*

George Formby's powers of entertainment appeal to other ranks, but he can make the High-Ups laugh, too. Here you can see GEN. MONTGOMERY'S *reactions to a Formby song.*

The marriage of MAJOR E. BEDDINGTON BEHRENS *to* PRINCESS IRENE OBOLENSKY, *second daughter of Prince and Princess Serge Obolensky, took place at the private chapel, Russian House, last week.*

PRINCESS MARGARET, *younger daughter of the King and Queen, was born on August 21, 1930, so this month she enters her fifteenth year. We all wish her many happy—and peaceful—returns of the day.*

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

"TIMELY" is the word for "THE WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER" (Empire). There are other words for it. "Sentimental" is one of them. But "timely" is probably the fairest. "The White Cliffs" is one of the first films to make a deliberate, conscientious and, on the whole, successful attempt to explain the British people to the Americans, and the Americans to the British.

Now that seems to me an admirable endeavour, and something that can do nothing but good in both our countries. For just as it is a fact that from now on the two nations will have to work more and more closely together—and *that* is a point the film makes, too, incidentally—so it is a fact that we, the common people of each country, are still almost complete strangers to each other.

Oh, we know the obvious things all right. We know that Americans play baseball, and chew gum, and believe in democracy, and drive on the right side of the road, and use a decimal system of coinage, and refer to their people as Gramps and Mom and Bud and Sis, and call their films movies and their policemen cops, and drink orange juice for breakfast, and address strange ladies as Ma'am. And the Americans know that we play cricket, and smoke pipes, and believe in monarchy, and drive on the wrong side of the road, and pay for things with fool bits of silver of odd amounts, and hardly refer to our people at all, and call our radio wireless and our policemen bobbies, and drink tea at every meal, and prefer not to address strange ladies under any circumstances.

We speak the same language, after a fashion, although we have a tendency to address each other rather loudly and plainly, as though we were speaking to a Hottentot or an imbecile child. We know enough of each other to get along without actual confusion in the ordinary exchanges of life. But we know next to nothing of each other's *backgrounds*—the little homely things that are the heritage of a nation—the sights and sounds and scents and memories—the colours of a countryside, the shape of fields, the look of houses seen from a train, the *timbre* of the voice of a crowd, children's ways, the feel of a nursery.

Now these are exactly the things that "The White Cliffs of Dover" tries very hard to explain. You and I, being exiguous, may not care for the manner of their explaining, but there is small doubt that this warm-hearted picture can do nothing but good in clearing up the difficulties of more simple folk both in this country and America. It has the quality that made "Random Harvest" such a conspicuous success—a clear, limpid kind of sentiment. And Irene Dunne's beautiful performance in a rôle that amounts almost to a monologue will do much towards bringing the film triumphantly through.

If you read Alice Duer Miller's narrative poem, or heard it on the wireless, you 'll remember that it was an American woman's confession of a growing and steadfast love for England. The film tells the story in a flashback. Miss Dunne first appears as a Red Cross nurse in the present war, waiting for casualties to come in from the Dieppe raid, with a premonition that her son is going to be one of the gravely wounded. In the hour before the ambulances arrive, her mind ranges back over the years she has spent in England. She pictures herself as a young girl again, coming to London for a holiday in the spring of 1914. She remembers how she planned to stay for a fortnight; how she met an Englishman at a ball, and married him and stayed for a lifetime; how she lost her husband in World War Number One, and watched her son grow up to become an English country squire, and join his father's regiment in World War Number Two.

"I am an American bred"—

that is the summing-up of Alice Duer Miller's gush of verse.

"I have seen much to hate here—much to forgive—
But in a world where England is finished or dead,
I do not wish to live."

A reserved Briton may feel that there is a good deal to forgive in the film, too, including Roddy MacDowall's conception of a titled British schoolboy, but on the whole, I still insist, the film is timely. Irene Dunne's gay and tremulous and tender performance as the heroine takes away from any real offence in the gush of her narrative. You feel that these are the outpourings of a rather too candid but very charming woman. And there are plenty of good, crisp character-studies from the older players to give the argument wit and solidity—notably from Sir Aubrey Smith as a retired British major, Frank Morgan as an American business-man, and Dame May Whitty as the sort of beloved, terrible old nannie who used to rule every respectable British home from the nursery hearth.

"Once Upon a Time" (Gaumont, Haymarket and Marble Arch Pavilion) there was a dancing caterpillar called Curly, owned and kept in a box by Pinky (TED DONALDSON) *and much desired by Jerry* (CARY GRANT) *for publicity purposes, to set his mortgaged theatre on its legs again. Jeannie* (JANET BLAIR), *Pinky's sister, watches the caterpillar's solo performance.*

Walt Disney offers a huge sum for Pinky's caterpillar; toymakers deluge Jerry with offers; but Pinky won't part. One day Curly disappears. Jeannie and Pinky hunt everywhere for him, but he is no more. He has turned into a butterfly. A Columbia picture.

N.B.—Our list of the Best Theatres will be found on page 106.

" THE STORY OF DR. WASSELL " (Carlton) seems to me a shining Technicolor example of the mistakes that can be made by well-meaning people who won't leave a good, true story alone.

One evening in 1942 President Roosevelt, in one of his broadcasts, described an episode from the Pacific war, concerning a certain Dr. Corydon Wassell. Dr. Wassell was an elderly country doctor from Arkansas. He had gone to China as a medical missionary, joined the U.S. Naval Reserve, and found himself in Java after Pearl Harbour, in charge of the wounded men from the American cruisers " Marblehead " and " Houston." When the Japanese landed on Java, it was Dr. Wassell's job to get the walking wounded evacuated to Australia. At the risk of a court-martial, ...ting entirely on his own author...y, and in the face of heavy ...panese bombing, he managed to ... even the stretcher cases safely ...ard the rescue ship.

...hat was the real story of Dr. ...ssell, and film director Cecil B. ... Mille was so much impressed by ...ident Roosevelt's broadcast, ... he promptly set to work to ... it into a film feature. The first ...g he did was to cast Gary Cooper as the elderly doctor. After ... of course, all sorts of elaborate complications happened to the ...ple story—including Love, and Dr. Wassell in a bath.

DEANNA DURBIN *sings a speciality number in Universal's " Christmas Holiday " (Leicester Square Theatre), which is reviewed in this article.*

" Government Girl " (New Gallery; August 27) stars **OLIVIA DE HAVILLAND** *as Smokey Allard, secretary to head of the Bomber Division Ed Browne* (**SONNY TUFTS**). *One morning she cadges a lift from the Boss, but it doesn't result in a date as she hoped.*

" The Story of Dr. Wassell " is a big, brash and busy Technicolor epic, with Mr. Cooper moving handsomely through some highly conventionalised heroics. There is lots of blood, which distresses you no more than so much grease-paint, and a staff of nursing lovelies (Laraine Day, Signe Hasso and Carol Thurston), each more stunning than the other. It has a high degree of technical proficiency, for Mr. de Mille learnt nearly a quarter of a century ago how to make a proficient picture, and has never seen any reason to revise his methods. His screen is tightly packed, and in constant movement. He doesn't waste a corner of it. He slashes in his climaxes with big, bold strokes. His sentiments are always clear and simple. He is an expert showman and a vivid romancer, although a little old-fashioned in both departments. His " Story of Dr. Wassell " is the confident entertainment of a man who cannot believe that fiction is sometimes less effective than fact.

I went to see Deanna Durbin in " CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY " (Leicester Square) with high hopes. The title conjured up a delectable picture of something bright, and snowy, and gala : the sort of happy, youthful film this pleasant little star ought always to be making ; something with carols, perhaps, and sleigh-bells, and family parties, and the Fairy on the Christmas-tree.

Alas for human hopes! " Christmas Holiday," the film with that cosy title, is the most melancholy, the most unyouthful and the most lurid piece in which Miss Durbin has ever assisted. It is adapted in a drastic sort of way from a Somerset Maugham story, and the scene is mostly set in a low night-haunt in New Orleans. A young Army officer (Dean Harens), flying to San Francisco, is grounded in a storm, and taken along to this seedy roadhouse by an equally seedy reporter. There a professional hostess—Deanna, by all that 's holy !—tells him the sad story of her life in flashback. She has married, it seems, a degenerate young man (Gene Kelly), whom she still loves dimly, in spite of the fact that he has murdered a bookmaker and is serving a long prison sentence.

Nobody in the audience will be surprised when the husband escapes from prison, but it may come as a bit of a shock to some of you when he tries to murder little Miss Durbin ; not, mind you, for singing bad blues or wearing unbecoming gowns, or even for slapping too much make-up on her face, but on the grounds that she has been unfaithful.

Well, there you are, then. Deanna Durbin, as a sophisticated torch-singer, consorting in low dives with drunken reporters, and pursued by a homicidal husband who suspects her of infidelity ! Christmas Holiday indeed ! April Fools' Day.

" HOME IN INDIANA " (Odeon) seems to me a very pretty little picture, but then I have an affection for these films of American outdoor life, told in shades of subdued Technicolor. " Home in Indiana " is just as rustic as it sounds. When it 's not about horse-breeding and sulky-racing, it 's about calf-love. A young boy who is running a bit wild is sent to his great-uncle's farm to make himself useful in the training stables. He finds the farm gone to ruin, and one old blind mare the only occupant of the stables. By secretly " borrowing " a champion stallion from the rival training stables next door, he breeds a filly who grows into a prize-winning trotter, and puts the farm back on a paying basis. In and amongst these practical activities, the boy falls in love, diffidently, with two young girls, the trainer's pig-tailed daughter, and the smart young lady from the big house. The film handles this triangular affair very delicately, with three new starlets, Lon McCallister, Jeanne Crain and June Haver.

Smokey and May (**ANNE SHIRLEY**) *dine out with spy Count Bodinski* (**GEORGE GIVOT**) *who tries to pick their brains about the new bombers. Smokey eventually attends a Senate hearing, and whitewashes her Boss, about whom she has indiscreetly chattered.*

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

SERGT. MARJORY SMITH, *for getting the high-low on the hop.*

SERGT. MARJORY SMITH, A.T.S., won both the high jump and the long jump at a recent A.-A. Command athletic meeting at Sudbury Hill. General Sir Frederick Pile, G.O.C.-in-C., A.-A. Command, gave away the prizes.

PETTY OFFICER PAT TURNER, *the Navy's first woman pilot, for being taken in tow by a skipper.*

MARSHAL JOSIF BROZ (TITO to you), the Yugoslav partisan leader, takes his pet dog Tigar for a dip in a mountain stream when it gets too hot for him (the sun, not the enemy). Tito was recently made Minister of War of the Yugoslavian Government in exile by King Peter, and on August 12 and 13 he had talks with Mr. Churchill in Italy prior to the Allied landings in the South of France.

THE group of sturdy FRENCHWOMEN in our picture, members of the French Army of the Interior, equipped with hand grenades, are typical of the women all over France who with magnificent endurance and courage have been part and parcel of the French forces of resistance, and who since the invasion have given most valuable help to the Allied Armies in France. As guides and scouts, saboteurs, moppers-up of German pockets of resistance, they are the tops, recalling in their spirit as well as in their breeks the fiery *sans-culottes* of the French Revolution.

P/O. PAT TURNER, W.R.N.S., twenty-one-year-old ship's pilot, was the first woman ever to claim the ten shillings pilotage fee for navigating H.M. ships in tricky river waters. Now she has been taken ashore by Lt. N. Crossley, R.N.V.R., skipper of a landing craft, who married her last week at Emanuel Church, Plymouth.

LIEUT.-GENERAL LEWIS H. BRERETON is in command of the recently combined British and American Airborne Forces, which approximate in size and importance to an army. The object of this merger is to integrate and make more effective the large airborne forces at the disposal of the Supreme Commander, General Eisenhower. Combat troops and the 'planes and gliders transporting them are included. General Brereton was formerly in command of the U.S. Ninth Air Force.

LIEUT.-GENERAL BRERETON, *for commanding the first army of its kind in history—the Anglo-U.S. Airborne Army.*

THESE MEMBERS OF THE FRENCH ARMY OF THE INTERIOR, *for being the last word in* sans-culottes.

MARSHAL TITO, *and* TIGAR, *for being partisan and pet all out in the swim together.*

AMBASSADOR'S WIFE.

LADY HALIFAX, C.I., *wife of the British Ambassador to Washington, Viscount Halifax, recently arrived in England with her husband. Lord Halifax has been Ambassador in Washington since 1941; in the King's Birthday Honours List in June this year he was made an earl, and will take the title of Earl of Halifax. Lady Halifax is the younger daughter of the fourth Earl of Onslow, and sister of the present Earl. She married Lord Halifax in 1901, and they have two sons and one daughter living. Lady Halifax received the Imperial Order of the Crown of India in 1926, when her husband was Viceroy and Governor-General of India.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY KARSH, OF OTTAWA.

L.A.C.W. IRENE CUTTER *(centre), giving her French song and dance, with members of the Gang.*

L.A.C.W.'S BROWN, WOOD, IRIS BRANKS, ANSE *singing*

THE FIRST ALL W.A.A.F. GANG SHOW, produced by S/Ldr. Ralph Reader, has given many performances in this country, and is highly popular. It has now gone over to France to entertain the R.A.F. behind the lines at the First Malcolm Club to be opened in Normandy. This is the seventh of the series of Malcolm Clubs, which stretches from Algiers, through Tunis, Bari, San Severo, and Naples to Rabat. It is installed in an eleventh-century château, formerly a German H.Q. It was opened by Sir Archibald Sinclair, Secretary of State for Air; and Air Chief-Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, and Lady Tedder (who runs the Clubs), General Spaatz, A.O.C., U.S. Strategic Air Force, Air Chief-Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, C.-in-C., A.E.A.F., and Mrs. Malcolm, widow of Wing-Commander H. G. Malcolm, V.C., whose deed of heroism in the desert is commemorated by the Clubs, were among those present.

L.A.C.W. IRENE CUTTER *in one of her humorous songs, as a Wing Commander with one year's service.*

"Someone's done our Nellie wrong"; L.A.C.W.'S PEGGY MOORE *and* AMY HUMPHRIS, *and* SERGT. MOLLY WATSON.

Before leaving for Normandy: the W.A.A.F. Gang PACKING UP THEIR COSTUMES *for their overseas tour.*

ALL ABOARD THE LORRY: *The W.A.A.F. Gang set off for W France; note the medieval head-dress which can't be packed*

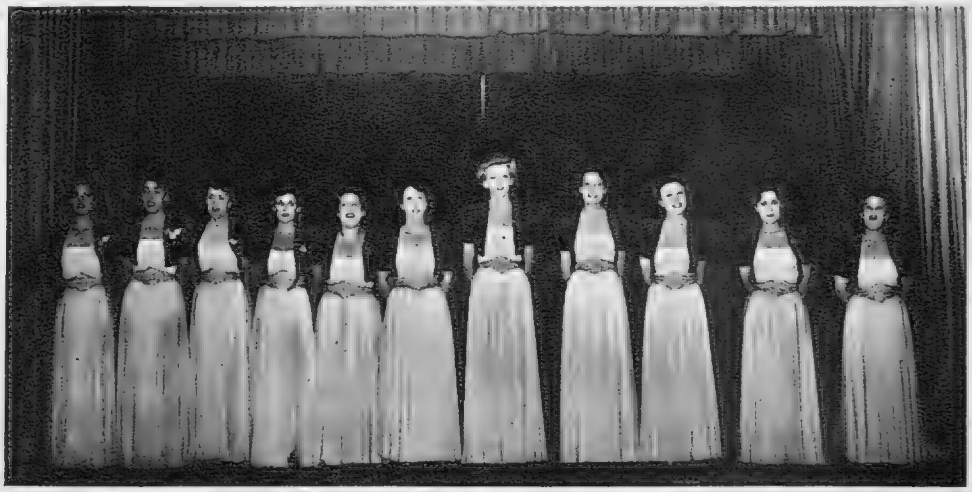
THE FIRST W.A.A.F. GANG SHOW VISITS FRANCE: TH

N.B. A Coloured

(in front; kneeling) HILLIER and McKINNON
dlelight."

The SINGERS OF "CANDLELIGHT" giving the graceful dance which makes the number a big hit.

L.A.C.W. PEGGY MOORE, SERGT. MOLLY WATSON and A.C.W. PAM TYLER (l. to r.) in "The Three Chars."



The whole Gang in the grand finale. They are the FIRST ALL-W.A.A.F. GANG SHOW, produced by S/Ldr. Ralph Reader.

ith the producer, S/LDR. RALPH READER (centre); The W.A.A.F. GANG SHOW beside the Dakota which took them to France.

In France: The W.A.A.F. GANG SHOW CAST with pilots and ground crews of a Spitfire Squadron.

GIRLS, ON THE STAGE, *EN ROUTE*, AND IN NORMANDY.

inserted in this issue.

EVACUEES IN RESIDENCE IN A CATHEDRAL.

The Very Rev. Henry Charles Robins, Dean of Salisbury, and Mrs. Robins are entertaining evacuee guests in unusual quarters, the Chapter House and Cloister Garth of Salisbury Cathedral. The Cathedral was consecrated with great ceremony in the presence of King Henry III. in 1258. The Dean's visitors live and sleep in the vast octagonal Chapter House, famous for its slender and delicate central vaulting shaft, and the remarkable size of the geometrical windows which almost fill each wall. Their beds look tiny in this great chamber, though screens have been set up round them to avoid draughts, and to divide the Chapter House into "cubicles." These screens and other furnishings have been provided by the ladies of the Diocese who work voluntarily for the Cathedral. They have also given the cooking pans for use in the kitchen hut put up by the Cloisters. A series of sixty vigorously sculptured scenes from Old Testament history adorn the thirteenth-century wall arcade of the Chapter House, and will, no doubt instruct and amuse the children. The Cloister Garth, which dates from the same period (1263-1284), is used as playground and alfresco dining-room. It consists of an arcade of uniform geometrical tracery beneath an expanse of plain wall—its four walks enclosing a pleasant green garth shaded by old cedars.

"What does this mean?" *Catherine* (DAME SYBIL THORNDIKE), *Petkoff* (NICHOLAS HANNEN), *Sergius* (LAURENCE OLIVIER) *and Louka* (JOYCE REDMAN).

"*What is the matter?*" "*Such news! There has been a battle.*" *Raina* (MARGARET LEIGHTON) *and Catherine* (DAME SYBIL THORNDIKE).

"*Oh, you are a very poor soldier, a chocolate-cream soldier*": *Raina* (MARGARET LEIGHTON) *and Bluntschli* (RALPH RICHARDSON).

"ARMS AND THE MAN" BY THE NEW OLD VIC COMPANY.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW'S "Arms and the Man" is one of the three plays which the new Old Vic Company has arranged to present at its forthcoming season at the New Theatre, due to open with "Peer Gynt" on August 31. "Arms and the Man" is to have its *première* on Tuesday, September 5. It was originally produced in 1894, and has been frequently revived.

"*Where was it, Nicola?*" "*Hanging up in the blue closet, Madame*": *Catherine, Petkoff and Nicola* (MORRIS SWEDEN; *left to right*).

RALPH RICHARDSON as *Bluntschli, the part which he played when "Arms and the Man" was last revived, in 1931, by the Old Vic.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN VICKERS.

AMAZONIAN "HERRENVOLK" AND WAY TO

The lithe and blithe dancer of the Greek camp followers is played by LUCILLE GAYE.

"The Temple of Minerva" exhibits living girls instead of marble statuary, but they are just as classically elegant and graceful.

Militant Antiope, General of the Amazon forces (ADELE DIXON), cannot resist a flirtation with Theseus, King of the Greeks (BRUCE TRENT).

While the Queen, having fallen for Sapiens, with passionate determination makes love to him on a couch.

"BY JUPITER," Broadway smash-hit, in its British form is now touring the provinces prior to London presentation. It has reached Liverpool this week. This American musical comedy, which has been running for eighteen months at the Shubert Theatre, New York, is adapted from Julian F. Thompson's play, "A Warrior's

[Continued opposite.

THEIR FALL: "BY JUPITER" IS ON ITS LONDON.

Litt Sapiens (BOBBY HOWES) *is presented to Queen Hippolyta by his mother Po ia* (CHIC ELLIOTT) *who, being also Minister of War, refuses equipment to the Amazon army unless the Queen accepts her son as a husband.*

Sapiens, looking very small and very shy, is surrounded and guarded by a squad of tall Amazon women.

Poor trembling Sapiens is held aloft in the strong arms of Hercules (DANNY GREEN).

Amazons on parade may be strong and fierce, but they are also gay and feminine.

Continued.]

Husband," by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, who also wrote the music and libretto. The story in appropriate classical settings is that of Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, whose girdle endows her with mastership. The Amazons are the *Herrenvolk*, the men their slaves. The Greek warriors can't endure this, and plan to steal the girdle. Hippolyta prepares to fight, but complications arise when she falls for Sapiens, the "little man" who asserts himself, throws his weight about, and puts Hippolyta in her place.

TWO-WIFE-POWER WIT: "IS YOUR HONEYMOON REALLY NECESSARY?"

The unwanted wife, Mrs. Vining No. 1 (ENID STAMP-TAYLOR), *does her best to vamp the staid bachelor solicitor* (VERNON KELSO).

Lawrence Vining (RALPH LYNN) *entertains his two wives* (ENID STAMP-TAYLOR *and* JUDITH ROGERS), *and his solicitor* (VERNON KELSO) *to breakfast.*

Lawrence Vining makes love to his second bride (JUDITH ROGERS), *though troubled by the fear that he may not be properly divorced from his first.*

"IS YOUR HONEYMOON REALLY NECESSARY?" is the new farce at the Duke of York's Theatre, starring Ralph Lynn. He goes through three acts of acute and engagingly ridiculous embarrassment as the bridegroom about to embark on a second honeymoon, suddenly faced with the possibility that he is not properly divorced from his first wife. To add to his troubles, the unwanted lady turns up, and joins the party. Need we say more? Mr. Lynn grasps every opportunity, and is ably supported.

The Lady's Maid (ANN WRIGG) *admonishes the butler* (ROBERT MCLACHLAN) *and the gardener* (EDWIN BENNETT).

MARK TWAIN'S LIFE AS A SCREEN STORY.

Boyhood days on the Mississippi: Sam Clemens (JACKIE BROWN) with Huck Finn (EUGENE HOLLAND) and Tom Sawyer (MICHAEL MILLER) and their Pal, and their hound-dog.

Sam Clemens, later to gain world-wide fame as Mark Twain (FREDERIC MARCH), *becomes a Mississippi River pilot. He is with Horace Bixby* (ROBERT BARRAT; *l.*) *and Charles Langdon* (WILLIAM HENRY).

Anxious to make money to marry Livvy Langdon, Clemens gives up his paddle steamer and joins in the gold rush, but his claim, "The Queen of Dixie," proves a disappointment.

Sam becomes a successful writer as "Mark Twain," but he longs for a business career. He invests in a crude typesetting machine, but it is a failure, and eats up his book profits.

Clemens is disgusted to find that his mining partner, Steve Gillis, has won the Jumping Frog contest by a foul. He has fed the champion, Dan'l Webster, with buckshot to weigh him down!

Clemens sees a miniature of lovely Livvy Langdon (ALEXIS SMITH) *when he meets her brother Charles* (WILLIAM HENRY), *and determines to make her his wife.*

"THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN," due at the Warner Theatre, Leicester Square, is a Warner Brothers First National picture biography of the famous American humorous writer, Samuel Clemens, known to all the world by his *nom de guerre* of Mark Twain. It traces his life from his childhood's adventures on the Mississippi, through his career as a reporter, his adventures in a mining camp, his business adventures and failures, to his final triumph and recognition as a writer of genius. The dialogue is based on Mark Twain's own writings.

Sam Clemens has always despised his work as the humorist "Mark Twain," but the day comes when he receives a honorary degree at Oxford from Lord Curzon of Kedleston (SIR AUBREY SMITH), *Chancellor of the University.*

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

IN 1873 Sir Ian Hamilton sailed to India to join the Gordon Highlanders. He was then twenty, and India remained his headquarters until 1898, when he was appointed Commandant to the School of Musketry at Hythe. It was Kipling's India, and Sir Ian, who was himself drawn to a literary career, has some interesting things to tell us about Kipling, whose early short story "The Mark of the Beast," received such a cool reception from editors ("I should strongly advise [him] instantly to burn this detestable piece of work," one of them wrote). Social life at Simla was a round of sport and shooting expeditions, of balls and parties and flirtations; and Sir Ian did not remain single long. His memories of these early years are deliciously frank and fresh and human: the episode of the kissed-off curl is one of the most endearing.

Three Generals. But the main concern of "Listening for the Drums" is not social or literary or even personal, but military. Here, too, the angles of approach seem endless. Of his own campaigns—breath-taking, many of them—the account of Majuba, where he lost the use of his left arm and was left for dead, stands out; though hardly more vividly than the expedition down the Nile in relief of General Gordon, which did not save Gordon though it yielded a victory over the Dervishes at "the venturesome little battle" of Kirbekan. Of Lord Wolseley, organiser of the Desert Column, Sir Ian has some sharp things to say. "He was in advance of his time. Dissect this stunt of his [and] you will diagnose the incipient bust-or-boost disease very easily." Army politics at this time make an interesting study; and the author's analysis of the differences in method and outlook between Lord Roberts, Lord Wolseley and Lord Kitchener is most illuminating. Lord Roberts is his hero; of the other two he writes with reserve—sometimes without reserve. His dislike of Kitchener was shared by a young officer who was soon to be his close friend. Writing from the Sudan in 1898 Winston Churchill says of Kitchener: "He is a great general but he has yet to be accused of being a great gentleman."

With further glimpses of the Prime Minister in youth Sir Ian Hamilton's story closes. Written with the dash and *élan* of a cavalry charge, it is a fine achievement for a man of his—or, indeed, of any—age.

Conflicting Loyalties. Diony was the daughter of an idealistic Frenchman and a materially-minded Englishwoman; she took after her father, but we are not told much about him; his wife drained him of the desire to live, and when an avalanche started on the Alps above him he did not trouble to get out of the way. The struggle for Diony was fought out between her grandparents and her mother. They had the advantage of having paid her school fees, but they lived in Geneva, whereas Sybil, a successful smart journalist, lived on the spot. It was to Geneva, however, both literally and metaphorically, that Diony's thoughts turned; and Miss Macardle's story, "The Seed was Kind," opens with her arrival there on a visit to her grandparents. Geneva meant to her not only them, but the League of Nations, and Diony, still a schoolgirl in the late 1930's, was passionately interested in European politics, a subject on which her grandfather had written several outstanding books. It was her ambition to work for the League, but her mother, who had no interests outside her own immediate advantage, whether in love or money, wanted her daughter to join her in her various enterprises. So Diony was kept away from the League until the political situation put it definitely out of reach. But when war broke out she found life in the fashionable hotel her mother was running for rich evacuees from London too disagreeable, and finally broke with her, to lead an existence that was physically uncomfortable, but spiritually much more to her taste, in a hostel in London. Here her grandmother joined her, and a number of refugees of various nations; also numbered in her circle were Karel, the young Czech, of austere nature and forbidding demeanour, who had captured her heart in Geneva, and the violinist, Toni, a genius, a neurotic and a raging egoist who loved her and for whom she felt a pity that was not really akin to love. It was the winter of the Blitz and Toni's preparations for his all-important concert were interrupted by the crashing of bombs.

Miss Macardle's characterisation is clever and full of insight; few members of her large cast escape her sympathy except Sybil, who is a "nasty piece of work," a villainess of the old school. To the drama of Diony's conflicting loyalties succeeds another, rather less convincing, based on her love for Karel and her pity for Toni. The influences on her life are so contradictory that she has no criterion of conduct except her heart, which ultimately (and I thought rather improbably) betrays her conscience. Her ebullient youthfulness, which is one of her most attractive qualities, pervades the story and sometimes gives it an air of naiveté. But in spite of its somewhat too personal and feminine point of view, "The Seed was Kind" is full of good things and very well worth reading.

Farming in Westmorland. Mr. Adrian Bell is known for his stories about farming in Suffolk. In "Sunrise to Sunset" he sets out, literally, for pastures new. Having evacuated his family to Westmorland, he follows them and is soon lending a hand on Mr. Rockall's farm. In Suffolk agriculture was mechanised: here nearly everything is done by hand. In the plains of Suffolk steep gradients were few; here Mr. Bell found himself working on hillsides among sheep so active and hardy that they could stand six times as much fatigue as those in Suffolk. These are only a few of the many differences noted by Mr. Bell's expert eye. His very title which, in its broader sense, suggests the day-long character of the husbandman's toil, has a special reference to the way that "hattocks" ("stooks," in Suffolk) are orientated in Westmorland. But though he makes it his business to observe differences, he does not come as a hostile critic; indeed, he tends to welcome departures from his own tradition, and to look askance on labour-saving devices. What, in the abstract, he likes about farming is the principle of growth; he speaks of a farmer "accumulating his life about him slowly." He is fascinated by the sight of a harness-maker sewing a leather seam. "His quiet, I felt, was powerful, his sewing a most potent spell sewing inexhaustibly out of himself, like a spider all day long."

"Sunrise to Sunset" is a book for those who understand, or are interested in, the niceties of farming; it has no shape except the curve of the season (the summer of 1940), and no dramatic episodes; even when Mr. Bell digs a fork into someone the victim is not seriously annoyed or hurt. But it is packed with careful and loving observation not only of farming, but of farmers, their families, and their outlook on life.

Peril at a Party.

In detective fiction, country-house parties are always fraught with danger; and when a party is given to enable a man's first wife to make friends with his second the peril is obvious. Yet, in "Towards Zero" it is neither Audrey nor Kay Strange who gets killed; it is their hostess, Lady Tresillian, at whose death both Nevile Strange and "his wife" (only, which wife?) were to inherit a large sum of money. The arrangements for her death were as complex as those for Mr. Treves's were simple, and Superintendent Battle had a difficult task in sifting out the evidence that was meant for him from the evidence that was not.

"Towards Zero" is one of the few of Mrs. Christie's stories in which I have been able to spot the criminal at an early stage and keep my suspicions almost intact to the end—so that if I complain that the story is too clever it sounds not only ungrateful but also conceited. But in this case the cleverness is not so much an integral part of the story as Mrs. Christie usually makes it; the eye of faith can afford to disregard the many webs that she spins so temptingly but not absolutely in the direct line of conjecture.

As usual, the dialogue is a joy, and some of the characterisation is not only good but too good for Mrs. Christie's purpose—which is, of course, to mislead. I liked the little sketch of Mrs. Amphrey, the headmistress, with her "eager face suggestive of a conscientious greyhound," whose psychological hunch about the Superintendent's daughter was so plausible and so woefully wrong. For touches like these, and for many others, and perhaps for the mere satisfaction of having solved the problem of "who," though not of "why" or "how," I enjoyed this story almost as much as some of Mrs. Christie's more baffling mysteries.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

Listening for the Drums. By Sir Ian Hamilton. (*Faber and Faber*; 18s.)
The Seed was Kind. By Dorothy Macardle. (*Peter Davies*; 8s. 6d.)
Sunrise to Sunset. By Adrian Bell. (*John Lane*; 8s. 6d.)
Towards Zero. By Agatha Christie. (*Collins*; 7s. 6d.)

THE BEST PLAYS.

Starred by "The Sketch." ***=top-score.

*** "BLITHE SPIRIT" (*Duchess*). Coward play. Penelope Ward, Joyce Carey, Nicholas Phipps.

** "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE" (*Strand*). Witty, murderous farce. Lilian Braithwaite, Mary Jerrold, Naunton Wayne, Frank Pettingell, Edmund Willard.

** "WHILE THE SUN SHINES" (*Globe*). Rattigan's farce. Jane Baxter, Ronald Squire, Hugh McDermott.

** "SWEETER AND LOWER" (*Ambassadors*). Second edition of "Sweet and Low" revue: Hermione Gingold and Henry Kendall.

** ONE HOUR OF BALLET (*Cambridge*).—2 p.m. 6—7 p.m. Popular prices. Buffet.

* "QUIET WEEK-END" (*Wyndham's*). Sequel to "Quiet Wedding."

* "IS YOUR HONEYMOON REALLY NECESSARY?" (*Duke of York's*). Ralph Lynn; Enid Stamp Taylor.

* "THIS WAS A WOMAN" (*Comedy*). Sonia Dresdel, John Bryning, Nova Pilbeam in effective melodrama.

* "THE LAST OF MRS. CHEYNEY" (*Savoy*). Lonsdale revival. Jack Buchanan, Coral Browne, Athene Seyler, Austin Trevor, Margaret Scudamore.

* "KEEP GOING" (*Palace*). Revue. Cyril Fletcher, Phyllis Monkman, Lulu Dukes.

* SADLER'S WELLS OPERA (*Princes*).

N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. Consult your daily paper; ring up the theatre to avoid disappointment.

Pin-up Girl: No. 7. Jinx Falkenburg.

JINX FALKENBURG is *America's Number One Model, and has appeared on more magazine covers and smiled from more billboards than perhaps any other girl. Her first featured screen rôle was in Columbia's "Two Latins from Manhattan," and she's currently in "Cover Girl." She's a natural blonde, five foot seven inches tall, with huge brown eyes. Born in Spain, she learnt to swim as a baby, and when she went to South America with her parents she captured the Swimming Championship of Chile when in her teens. The Falkenburgs came to Los Angeles when she was sixteen, and her career as a Cover Girl began without delay. Her real name is Eugenia, after her father, Eugene Falkenburg, a distinguished electrical engineer, but she has always answered to the name of Jinx.*

AS THINGS TURN OUT.*

By JOANNA MARKHAM.

THERE was a feverish gaiety about Marion Cardex disturbing to the peace of Jane and Bateman, with whom she shared the rest-room. It had become noticeably worse of late. She was undeniably good-looking, but less so than six months ago. The war job on which they were engaged was one that spoils a woman's looks, making furrows come between the eyes, the mouth to have a set expression, and the neck to thicken.

"A woman of thirty-five who works ten hours a day on 'squibs' should have an early bed," said Jane, eyeing Marion with disfavour.

"Thirty-five! Thirty-one last birthday," protested Marion, whipping out her mirror and examining her make-up.

Jane would not be side-tracked. "No woman over thirty-five who spends her days at work and her nights with boy friends can expect to keep her looks."

"Oh, damn you, Jane, you are a kill-joy. A sore throat prevented me from sleeping. I think I 've got this beastly German measles which is raging everywhere."

"An excuse for more sick-leave?" asked Jane, who had reasons for thinking her a slacker.

Ignoring this remark, Marion hurried from the room, saying: "Put the potatoes in the oven."

"'Put the potatoes in the oven'! I like that. She never does a damn thing," growled Jane.

"She 's haunted," said Bateman unexpectedly, looking up from her chair in the corner, where she had been trying to write letters.

"Haunted? By what? The fear of growing old?"

"By something that happened to her out in France."

"Gosh! And she tries to drown the memory in short drinks?"

"Exactly. I don't know much about it, but I 'll tell you."

She might well say that Marion was haunted, for, unless distracted, her thoughts returned to a moment in time and space more vivid than anything she could now experience in life. . . . She was sitting in the salon of the Hotel de la Poste at Nogent, utterly exhausted, Timmy fast asleep beside her, thinking that unless she could stop listening she would never sleep again . . . listening for Topsy.

The salon must have looked the same for a century at least, dusted and polished, but unused, its life suspended, unconscious of the world's upheavals. The windows were frosted as though to preserve its privacy, but since they were directly on the street, form-like shadows could be seen pressing closely past them—shadows of people going somewhere, to the sound of voices, cars and rumbling carts.

For days she and her children had been in this procession, this exodus from Paris, Versailles and Rambouillet. They were lucky to be travelling by car. They had picked up one or two old people . . . it wasn't pleasant to be thought hard-hearted, but with herself, two children, and the luggage they were already overcrowded. She had fancied there was something shifty about François, so that each morning she feared to find him gone, sold to a higher bidder; but perhaps he would not leave the children. Now that he was unshaven and unkempt she felt less confidence in him, but to the children he was just their friend. . . . "*François, voyez donc ce petit chien . . . voyez ce drôle,*" making him smile. He had three children and his wife was now *enceinte.* He seemed to pity Marion, who had only two. Two children! Then that frightful thing had happened.

At Nogent post-office it was still possible to telephone to places further west, and since St. Malo was full of British steamers waiting to take off refugees, it would be wise to reserve a cabin if one could. Cook's office would be the last to close. She shut herself into the call-box while the children waited . . . the receiver smelt of garlic . . . how revolting . . . St. Malo was difficult to get . . . there were voices on the line. Hello—hello— She became impatient in the stuffy air. Suddenly there came the roar of enemy dive-bombers, and people surged into the post-office, struggling for shelter. Marion now found herself hemmed in, and when at last the crowd dispersed, Timmy and Topsy were nowhere to be seen. Anxiously she searched the streets, to be at last rewarded by the sight of François with Timmy in his arms—Timmy rather proud of his adventure. He had been taken to an *Asile* for the blind by some passer-by.

But neither he nor François had seen Topsy, nor did the most exhaustive search reveal her. The gendarmes quite reasonably suggested that she must have been caught up in the crowd and would be found upon the road to Le Mans or Tours, but which, God alone could tell.

All through that long and hideous night Marion sat listening in the salon, Timmy sleeping on the couch beside her—listening for Topsy's voice, fancying at every step that someone was about to bring her in. What would Tom do if he were here? What would he advise? By the morning she had come to no conclusion.

François, however, was unwilling to delay. German tanks were thundering towards Nogent—no stories were too wild to be believed. He would drive Madame no farther than Le Mans, for his first duty was to his poor wife and children. He would return by unfrequented roads to Paris. So Marion must now decide . . . stay or drive on to Le Mans, where they might chance to get a train to Rennes . . . save Timmy and leave Topsy to her fate. . . . It was enough to drive her mad . . . if only Tom were here . . . or if only she had not insisted on having her own way. . . . François was waiting for his answer. She picked up Timmy. "To Le Mans," she said.

Well, how was she to blame? What more could anyone have done? They were as likely to find Topsy on that road as on any other, and it offered the best chance of escape for Timmy. She had thanked God it wasn't Timmy who was missing. . . . Topsy was two years older, after all, and well on in French, considering her age. Marion remembered with a stab of recollection that her heart had hardened a little against Topsy. Surely she might have found her way to the hotel. Why must she have caused them all this trouble? If only Tom had seen it in this light; but he doted upon Topsy.

Of course she—her mother—was devoted to her too—more than ever after she was lost, but the everlasting dwelling on the subject had made her introspective. She had come to know herself . . . she knew herself, but could not change . . . she had wished the child had looked less old, attracted less attention . . . at times she had felt jealous of her. Timmy had a nature like her own, gay and sociable; his sister was reserved and cool. She was, in some queer way, a challenge—a challenge to her values. There was criticism sometimes in those candid eyes. Timmy adored her in delightful fashion . . . or did he any longer? Was it fancy that now, being three years older, he looked at her almost as it were with Topsy's eyes? Marion pressed her hands against her own as if to shut out thought.

Well, it had proved a disappointing journey, for all their enquiries had revealed no trace of Topsy, and when at last they reached Le Mans there were hours to wait before the train for Rennes arrived—already overcrowded. François, however, by pushing, cursing, struggling, had forced them into a congested carriage, in which Marion, to her relief, caught sight of Miss Callaghan.

They had, indeed, only met her one night while resting at Rambouillet, but now she seemed to Marion an old and valued friend. She had been engaged at Chartres on some research work for her brother. She was a type—one of those delightful spinsters, unselfish, strong, efficient. Even in the confusion at Rambouillet she had been confident and smiling. Here was someone to whom she could pour out her troubles . . . someone almost like a man. By which vague definition Marion meant a person with superior judgment.

On the slow and hesitating journey towards Rennes people got out at various stations, so that, presently, there were seats for Marion and Timmy. Then Bertha Callaghan, producing rolls and chocolate from her satchel, divided them amongst the company, and later, with Timmy sleeping in her arms, she listened to Marion's long and incoherent story—the story of a woman unnerved and exhausted.

Such women as Bertha haven't really lived, thought Marion; they know nothing of the anguish of a mother . . . she must make her understand . . . make her realise in detail all that she had done . . . all that she was suffering.

"What, then, do you propose to do?" asked Bertha as the train was nearing Rennes.

"To give Timmy to the Captain at St. Malo and go back to look for Topsy. But I 'm so worried about Tom. He 'll go mad if anything should happen to me."

"I think you should return to England." That was what Bertha Callaghan had said . . . it was her idea . . . she who had advised it. So why should Marion be blamed? The train was slowing down . . . it was impossible to think. Bertha drew a parcel from her satchel and addressed it to her brother.

"This is important," she said, smiling. "Post it as soon as you get back. I have some work which will keep me in France a little longer."

The train for St. Malo was awaiting the connection. "Run," cried Bertha, shouldering their luggage. "Good-bye, Timmy. Give my love to Snoopy."

And that was the last they saw of her. How could Marion know what was in Bertha's mind? What right had she to take her place?

Bertha went to the booking-office and bought a single to Le Mans. Now she had one object only—to find the little girl who had sat close to her that evening at Rambouillet. She had gazed at her with great grey eyes, and said: "We have a dog at home; his name is Snoopy. I shall see him soon."

Bateman was finishing *her* version of the story. "Did you ever meet Bertha Callaghan?" she asked.

Jane shook her head. "No. Tell me more about her."

"Well, she was sturdy and thick-set, but with an easy way of moving that made you want to watch her. People crowded to see her playing tennis. She had a bright colour and thick, waving hair gone grey, and had never bothered with make-up. She was brought up with boys and fishing-rods. . . ." Bateman hesitated, at a loss for words. "She looked—I don't know how to put it—as though she never could be captured."

"You don't mean ——"

"Yes. News came a week or two ago that she had died in a concentration camp."

"And Topsy?"

"Nothing was ever heard of Topsy."

THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

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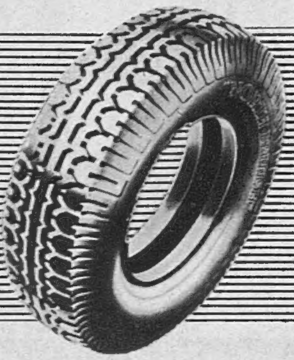

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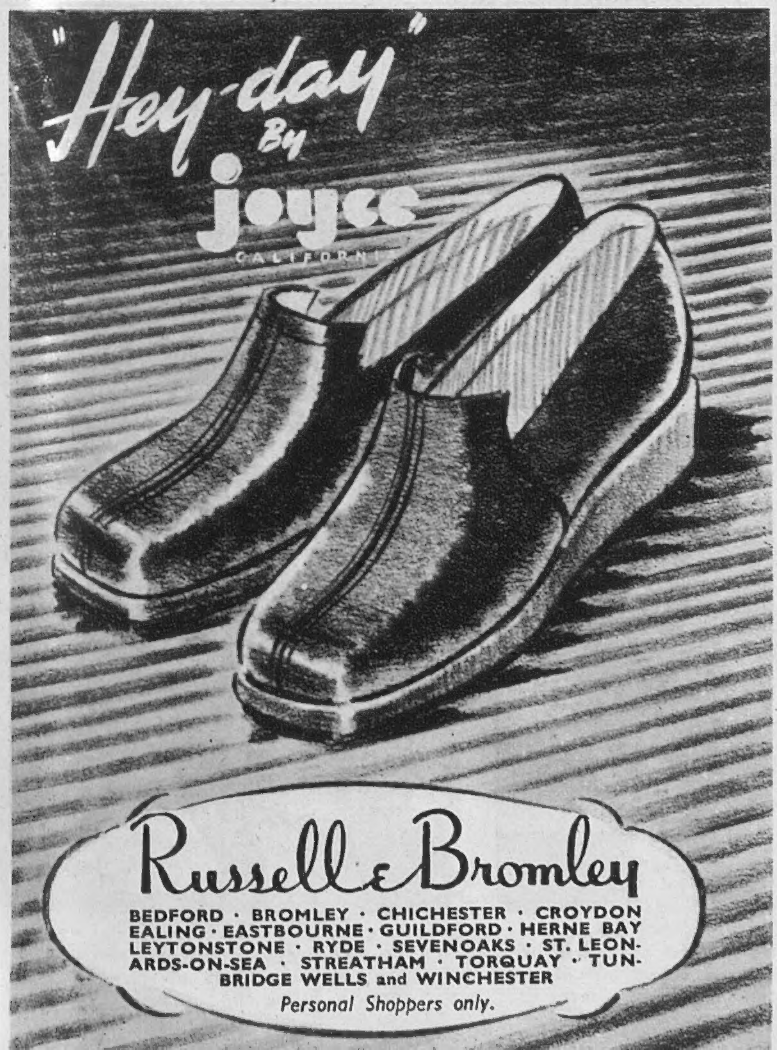

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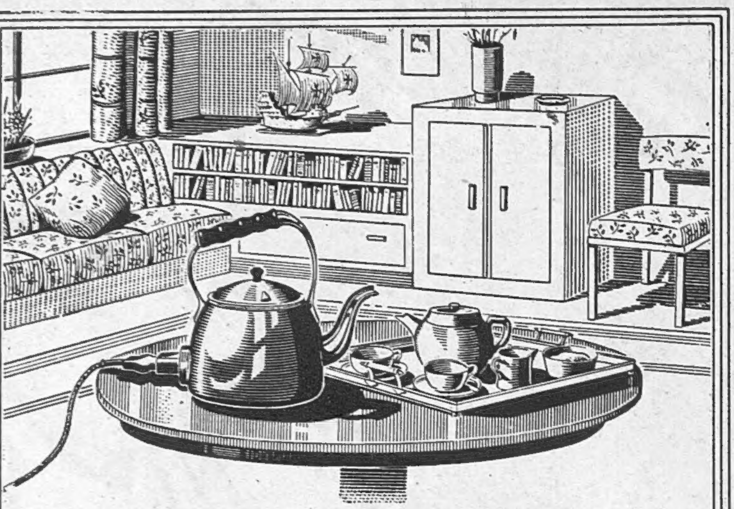

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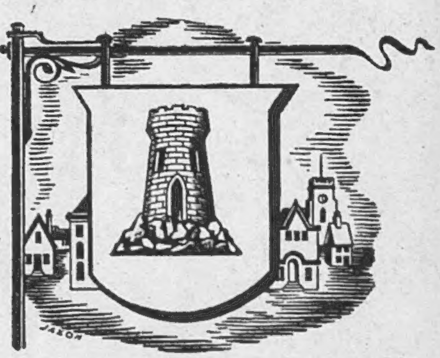

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